



Montana State Long Term Care Ombudsman

**OFFICE ON AGING-SENIOR AND LONG
TERM CARE DIVISION
DPHHS
PO Box 4210
HELENA, MT 59624**

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

The Long Term Care Ombudsman program (LTCOP), established in all states under the Older Americans Act (Title 7), works on behalf of residents in long term care facilities and assisted living facilities. The Montana LTCOP is authorized by and acts in accordance with the federal Older Americans Act, 42, U.S.C. Section 3001 et seq. Ombudsmen are trained advocates for residents of facilities, working to resolve problems of individual residents.

Ombudsmen are trained to provide information and assistance to residents and their families in an effort to ensure the best quality of life possible for residents. In Montana, all Ombudsmen must attend and pass a 45-hour training course in order to be certified as an Ombudsman. Regional Ombudsman must participate in a 60-hour training course. The volunteer component of the Ombudsman Program is the Friendly Visitor. Friendly Visitors receive eight hours of instruction and are assigned facilities to visit for 1-2 hours per week. All Ombudsmen participate in yearly re-certification training. There is one full-time State Ombudsman. State wide there are five full-time Regional Ombudsman, 34 certified local Ombudsmen, and six Friendly Visitors. The Regional and Local Ombudsman are employed by the Area Agencies on Aging.

Ombudsman Duties as Outlined in Title VII of the Older Americans Act:

- Helps resolve problems or complaints faced by people living in Assisted Living facilities or in Long Term Care facilities
- Provide information to residents about long-term care services
- Represent the interests of residents before various agencies to seek administrative, legal and other remedies to protect residents;
- Provide education about resident rights and good care practices
- Provide technical support for the development of resident and family councils
- Advocate for changes to improve residents' quality of life and care
- Promotes community involvement through volunteer opportunities
- Addresses improper transfer and/or discharges of residents
- Investigates allegations of physical, verbal or emotional abuse in long term care facilities
- Provides information to the public on nursing homes and assisted living facilities
- Addresses any resident or family concerns about quality of life
- Educate and inform consumers and the general public regarding issues and concerns related to long-term care

Resident Rights

Residents' rights are defined in the Older Americans Act and in Montana statute (Montana Long-Term Care Resident's Bill of Rights 50-5-11-1 through 50-5-1107 [PDF Format](#))

Residents have the right to, but not limited to:

- Being treated with dignity and respect;
- Being fully informed prior to admission of their rights, services available and all charges
- To be transferred or discharged against your wishes only for specified reasons provided by law; to be given at least 30 days written notification of such moves outside the facility; and to be informed of your appeal and readmission rights.
- To be fully informed by a physician of your medical condition; to be given the opportunity to participate in the planning of your medical treatment;
- To be free from chemical and physical restraint;
- To voice grievances without fear of retaliation;
- To receive and send personal mail;
- To be assured privacy for visits by your spouse or to be permitted to share a room with your spouse if she/he is also a resident;
- Associate and communicate privately with any person of their choice;
- Have personal and medical records kept confidential;
- To file a complaint or recommend changes in policies and services for yourself or others to the resident council, facility staff and/or outside representatives and to be informed by the facility of the outcome of any complaints presented; or to ask Ombudsman for assistance in resolving grievances.
- To examine the results of the most recent state or federal inspection of the facility and any plan of correction.

For More Information, contact the

***State Long Term Care Ombudsman
Office on Aging, Senior and Long Term Care, DPHHS
1-800-332-2272***

OR

***Your Regional or Local Ombudsman
Area Agency on Aging
1-800-551-3191***